

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 56th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON STATE ADMINISTRATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN MACK COLE**, on January 27, 1999 at 10:00 A.M., in Room 331 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Mack Cole, Chairman (R)
Sen. Don Hargrove, Vice Chairman (R)
Sen. Jon Tester (D)
Sen. Jack Wells (R)
Sen. Bill Wilson (D)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Keri Burkhardt, Committee Secretary
David Niss, Legislative Branch

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: None.
Executive Action: None.

DISCUSSION ON SB 228

The committee held an informational meeting on SB 228 to plan objectives for a group of interested parties to meet and discuss election dates. First, some information concerning the Department of Revenue was gathered from **Mary Bryson, Director of the Department of Revenue** **EXHIBIT**(sts21a01). Then informational witnesses spoke about their concerns with the bill.

{Tape : 1; Side : A; Approx. Time: 10:35; Comments : BEGAN TAPING AT 10:35, THE RECORDER TAPED THE MEETING AT A FASTER SPEED THAN NORMAL, DUE TO A MACHINE MALFUNCTION.}

Information on SB 228

Jan McCall, City of Billings, informed the committee that a May or June election date does not allow them enough time to establish budgets for the tax election.

Alec Hansen, League of Cities, said that the first part of May is the earliest date the city can hold a tax election in order to gather the information from the Department of Revenue to adopt a budget. He asked that the committee keep the primary election in September, general election in November, and schedule the finance elections in the spring.

{Tape : 1; Side : A; Approx. Time: 10:42}

SEN. JACK WELLS asked **Mr. Hansen** if the category 9 evaluations were the primary problems for the city, in their opposition to meeting a March or early April election date, and if they could meet the early election date if the category 9 evaluations could be delayed until July. **Mr. Hansen** affirmed that the category 9 evaluations were the largest problem in meeting the March or April election date and if these could be delayed until July the city could work with those dates.

SEN. MAC COLE asked **Mr. Hansen** if he would be willing to serve, as a representative of the city, on a committee to discuss the implementation of the bill. **Mr. Hansen** agreed to volunteer.

Charles Brooks, for the Yellowstone County Commissioner, also said that a March election would be too early. He offered to serve on a committee as well.

Bill Kennedy, County Commissioner, Yellowstone, stated that his staff is working on parts of the bill that may have a hindrance on local government.

SEN. JON TESTER asked **Mr. Hansen** if the only reason he opposed the earlier date is the property values and **Mr. Hansen** answered that it was the primary reason. He added that the information would not be adequate to calculate the level of funding required.

{Tape : 1; Side : B; Approx. Time: 10:57}

SEN. JON TESTER asked **Mr. Kennedy** if a solid property evaluation was always needed when the budget is drafted. **Mr. Kennedy** explained that normally a budget is developed by the 1st of July and the actual evaluations from the Department of Revenue are not received until the end of August, at which time an assessor looks

over the figures to verify the budget. The budget is then accepted around the 2nd week in August. Mr. Kennedy also explained that in some cases these evaluations are needed before the budget is drafted but not all cases.

Discussion: The committee began talking about the representatives of interested parties that should be involved with the meeting, organized by the Secretary of State's office.

SEN. DON HARGROVE passed out a list of policy decisions the committee should make before the outside group meets

EXHIBIT(sts21a02).

{Tape : 2; Side : a; Approx. Time: 11:15}

The consensus of the committee was that looking at a chart of dates and effects would aide in the decision making process. Also, they decided that after policy decisions were made the outside group, of designated individuals, would be given time to work out the technicalities according to their needs.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 11:24 A.M.

SEN. MACK COLE, Chairman

KERI BURKHARDT, Secretary

MC/KB

EXHIBIT (sts21aad)